Woman as a Musician,

An Art-Historical Study,

By Fanny Raymond Ritter.

#75
6-61-33

WOMAN AS A MUSICIAN.

AN ART-HISTORICAL STUDY,

BY

FANNY RAYMOND RITTER,

Translator and Editor of 'Music and Musicians, Essays and Criticisms by Robert Schumann.'

LONDON:

WILLIAM REEVES, 185, FLEET STREET, E.C.

Publisher of Musical Works.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/womanasmusiciana00ritt

RBR
E Pam
12mo
= 3069

THE accompanying study was written in response to a request that I should present a paper on art before the Centennial Congress, in Philadelphia, of the "Association for the Advancement of Woman," which request was made to me by Professor Maria Mitchell (President of that Association); a lady who confesses, with rare candour, her own unmusical nature, yet, perhaps, while

> Lone as a star, she marks and counts the spheres,
> Their voiceless music in her soul she hears,

and certainly recognizes the importance of musical art to her sex in general.

The essay was read at that meeting by Mrs. Churchill, and published as read by her, in the "Woman's Journal."

As my subject, "Woman as a Musician," has never been historically treated before in this manner (though necessarily condensed, a style demanded by a paper intended to be read in public), I have acceded to the requests of many friends interested in art, and now publish the essay in more accessible form, with a few additions to its original contents.

I trust that it may serve the purpose for which it was written; that it may suggest the future adoption of musical themes, among the subjects to be treated of by the ladies of the Association (this was the first paper on music read at their meetings); and that it may aid in inducing a more serious study of musical art, as a necessary constituent of higher artistic culture among American women.

With this sincere desire, I add another plea to many already existing in favour of that refined, poetical, beautiful art, to which, with its kindred subjects, I dedicate so much of my life; and now offer it as an addition to the art records of the centennial anniversary of the American republic.

FANNY RAYMOND RITTER.

WOMAN AS A MUSICIAN.

During the long and tumultuous period that followed the decline of the Roman Empire, two spirits, the inward and the outward spirits of humanity, seemed, throughout Europe, to struggle for mastery; and in that struggle—itself a manifestation of the intense, newly awakened vitality of the Middle Ages—these spirits, approaching each other more nearly, perceived that they had many traits in common, that their combat was only a misunderstanding, that they were brothers; and, finally, embracing, they became united.

We all know that Art, while the highest possible result to which human imagination, emotion, and intellect can attain, is also, in its various forms, an exalted and idealized reflection of every passing epoch of human progress; thus the sensuous, serene, and in one sense nobly natural life of the Greeks, found its truthful illustration in the masterpieces of antique sculpture and architecture; thus the art of painting reached, during the picturesque epochs of the Middle Ages and the renaissance, to an astonishing height of excellence; but, to express in all its depth, richness, fullness, torture and ecstasy, this lately awakened, inward force, this spiritual result of the union of the old naturalistic heathenism and the young supernatural faith,—this new life, whose first heart-beat thrilled the world at that supreme moment, when, beside the haunted shores, and over the classic waters of the Ægean Sea, a voice was heard to murmur, "Great Pan is dead!"—to embody this, another art was needed; then, from the bosom of Christianity, arose the modern art of Music.

Ample evidence remains to us of the tone-system of the Greeks,

and several authentic fragments of their music exist; from all this we find that their instrumental music never advanced beyond the merest rudiments, and that their singing was only a heightening of the effect of their beautiful language, by means of rhythmical cadences, rhetorical pauses, and varied intonation. On account of the extreme respect and admiration which the Greek poets and philosophers express for music, many modern writers, insufficiently acquainted with the subject, have supposed that Greek music must have reached a very high state of perfection; I regard such expressions of admiration only as proofs of the intellectual discernment of those gifted men, who were able to appreciate the high value, and still higher possibilities of music, even in its rough root, as it existed among them. What would not these poets and philosophers have written of music, could they have known it as it now is? As it was, however, Plato said,—that no man could be virtuous, whose life is not in harmony with music; Pythagoras thought that music stood so far above the senses, that only a lofty intellect was able to judge of it; Chiron said that music should be placed above morals or medicine, as an element of culture; Aristoxenes advised that music should always be introduced at feasts, because its inherent symmetry and order restrained mind and body from excess; Archytas, Plutarch, and others agreed that the power of music extends to every part of nature, that it regulates all motion, and even rules the course of the spheres.

And yet in spite of the great encomiums of great men, the music of those days gave scarcely even an idea of the sublimity to which it has arrived in our days. Music, as we understand it, scarcely had an existence prior to the establishment of Christianity; its feeble germ, nursed in the rocks and caves where the early Christians found refuge, fanned by the sighs, and watered by the tears of the persecuted, developed into existence as the Ambrosian and Gregorian chants, then spread, through storm and transition, into the life of the people, as the troubadour, minstrel, war, folk-song, and dance music, until it became, under its present splendid and varied forms of artistic song, and instrumental composition, what it now is,—the reigning art of to-day, the most consummate flower of modern civilization, intellectual culture, and artistic refinement.

Music, though in one sense a mathematical abstraction, and based on exact science, like other arts, is wholly original and self-existent. It is not reproductive and imitative as are the plastic arts to a certain extent; its object is higher than that of mere reflection; it aims at expressing those emotions and aspirations, which are awakened in thinking

and feeling humanity by the passions and events of life and time, or by the contemplation and comprehension of the order, proportion, unity, variety, power, terror, beauty, symmetry, profundity and immensity of the universe. It is the most transcendental of all arts, for it is a purely metaphysical outward manifestation of the inward soul; it is the most complex of all arts, for at once it is vague, definite, and infinitely precise; it is the most ideal of all arts, for it is the beautiful result of unshaken faith in progress towards perfection, and is itself almost a religion, in its purity and sublimity. In the evanescent, intangible form of music, from small materials yet vast possibilities, the human heart and mind have gradually evoked a language, a science, an art, compared with whose simple means and immense results, the miraculous creations of the fabulous magicians of antiquity would appear cold, pale, aimless and meaningless.

I shall now endeavour to sketch the share of woman—which art history has until now neglected to point out, fully and separately—in this gradual, historical development of music to the point of pre-eminence where we find it in our own day. Woman's voice certainly united in the chants and hymns that echoed through the caves and deserts to which the early Christians fled in order to celebrate their worship; though afterwards, in the 16th century, she was cast out as an official musician from the *prosperous* church, we know that in the early, *persecuted* church, she bore her part as singer as well as martyr; whether she had any share in the composition of those early chants in which she practically united, is doubtful, and will forever remain unknown. In the middle ages, woman was the universal martyr; forgotten by others, she forgot herself. It was not until the end of the 14th century, that women began to be anything more than the toys of the higher, the beasts of burden among the lower classes. That mediæval epoch must have been an epoch of darkness, ignorance, oppression and despair for women of low station—the great majority of women, in short, who, finding themselves almost wholly unprotected by law or opinion, fled for safety to the pretended practice of magic. Discovering that the superstitious fears of men would invest them with a sort of protection, they affected to become witches, though they knew that torture and death awaited them if they were betrayed. The early church even condemned those women to the death of the sorceress, who dared "to *cure* other sick than those of their own families, unless they had previously studied medicine." And to what opprobrium would they not have been subjected then, had those anxious mothers, wives, and sisters, then dared to enter

a school of medicine for the purpose of studying the healing art! Yet, when the famous doctor Paracelsus burned the tomes of Arabic, Greek, and Jewish medicine, he declared that he had not learned anything of physic worth retaining, except from the sorceresses, whose medicines were principally vegetable. The few historical clues we possess, lead us most unwillingly to the conclusion that the first timid steps of woman within the portals of this new art, were rather trammelled, than encouraged and assisted; and if any trace of woman as a musician remains from the era of mediæval sorcery, witch-burning, and the slow overcoming of popular superstition by means of philosophy and natural science, it is to be found in the folk-songs, those beautiful memorials of individual and national life, composed and written by anonymous singers and poets among the people. It is almost impossible to believe that women traversed that long period of persecution, struggle, despair, hope, and aspiration, without giving voice to their emotions; and as national and peasant folk-songs are traditionally said to have been nearly always composed by the persons who first sang them, and as women have always been their most zealous performers, it is only fair to suppose that they have also had something to do with their composition as well as with their poetry. It would be unnatural to think that the beautiful lullabies and cradle songs, of which hundreds exist, in different languages and nationalities, were composed by martial barons, rough servingmen, or rougher peasants, and not by their wives or daughters; we know that in Bèarn, in Ireland, in the Basque provinces, and elsewhere, women have always been preferred as the vocal eulogists of the departed, in funeral songs; nor could the sibyllic utterances of Druid priestesses, the terrible incantations and magic songs of the early sorceresses, have been invented by others than themselves. And the melancholy life of the serf, watching her flocks on the green hills, or gathering wood for her hearth amid the implacable brambles,—and the lonely lady of the castle, spinning or embroidering her cunning tapestries while she waited, sometimes for years, the return of her father, husband, brother, lover,—and then the anxious women of the fisher people,—did they indeed endure their sorrows voicelessly?—I cannot believe it; I have no doubt but that many of those simple, touching, heart-breaking melodies and poems were of women's creation. This question is a novel one; but, since the comparatively recent study of philology has been the source of many unexpected revelations, further study of the musical branch of historical investigation will throw light on many points that have hitherto remained obscure.

But, though woman's share in the authorship of these folk-songs is uncertain, she has had considerable part in their compilation from the mouths of the people, who, unable to read or write, have handed them down, *viva voce*, through centuries. Fernan Caballero (recently deceased) has collected a number of Spanish popular songs; the Countess of Dufferin and Miss Brooke have translated many Irish folk-songs from the original Celtic into English; the Countess de la Villemarquè was of the greatest assistance to her son in making his famous collection of Breton songs; Coussemaker wrote down the larger part of his interesting Flemish songs from the lips of the poor lace makers of Holland; Madame George Sand says that she has seen Chopin and Madame Viardot Garcia spending hours in noting down the wild melodies sung by the peasant women of the French provinces; Rivarès, in his collection of Bèarnais folk-songs, gives a funeral song improvised by Marie, one of the most famous recent songstresses of the valley of Aspe in Bèarn. Marie's striking, healthy beauty, which, as well as her voice, she preserved to a great age, her lively imagination, her lofty character, and the high opinion she entertained of the nobility of her profession, rendered her a lovely modern embodiment of the antique Pythoness. When Goethe's fine translation of a Servian folk-song, "The complaint of the noble wife of Hassan Aga," drew the attention of poetical and musical Europe to the wonderful beauty of Servian folk-songs, a lady was among the first of thòse who attempted to preserve these monuments of national character, tradition and emotion, from the invading or effacing influences of change or oblivion, by means of the printing press. Fraülein von Jakob, afterwards the wife of an American professor, collected and published a large number of Servian folk-songs, which she translated into German from the original. In her compilation, as well as in those made by subsequent Slavonic, Italian and German littèrateurs, it is impossible not to be struck by the indescribable poetic loveliness of the Servian "Women's Songs," bearing, as these do, the stamp of Hindoo and Greek antiquity, as well as after invasion, conquest, emigration, and national change. And in studying the folk-songs of the Arabians—which, being yet unversed in Arabic, I only know by means of Spanish, Italian, German or French translations, scattered, few and far between, through scarce and rare old collections of national music now in my possession,—I have been struck by the poetic delicacy of feeling in regard to women, which these fragments of the antique glory of a people who held poetic tournaments at Mecca and elsewhere, before the 5th century, display; but which, perhaps, need not so much surprise us when

we remember that an Arabian queen, Balkis, of Saba, or Sheba, possessed knowledge enough to venture on visiting king Solomon, son of the musical king David, for the purpose of proving the genuineness of his learning "by hard questions," and that the reputation of that literary and artistic queen impelled the royal amateur to make splendid and tasteful demonstrations for her reception and in her honor. Was queen Balkis a feminine, unique phenomenon, or was she only one of a class of cultivated women among the Arabian aristocracy of that day?

It is well known that the subtle vein of feeling in regard to women, which permeates Celtic and Arabic folk-song, was in part appropriated by the troubadours during the epoch of the crusades. Without pursuing this part of my subject further at present (which I have already treated in a series of essays "On the music and poetry of the troubadours," originally published in the New York Weekly Review, and shortly to appear in collected form), I must observe the remarkable fact that a number of ladies of rank, wives, sisters, or daughters of troubadours, generally, became trouveresses, as they were called. Marie de France, and Clara d'Anduse, were among the most famous of these. In spite of the narrow educational resources then open to ladies even of the highest rank, and the restricted circle of their lives, we find, in the poetry of the trouveresses, as much apparent truthfulness and impassioned depth of feeling as in that of the troubadours, though betraying more negligence of treatment; while their melodies evince a greater want of finish and clearness of form than do those of the troubadours. Among the minstrels, followers of the troubadours, a few songstresses, generally the wives or daughters of minstrels, were trained to sing their male companions' songs by rote. From some of the old minstrel ballads it is possible to form an idea of the characters of these women; in a song by Colin Muset, a minstrel who flourished in the 13th century, he mentions his settled home, cook, groom, valet, etc., and represents his wife and daughter as industriously engaged in spinning, on his return from one of his tours; but the language with which they greet him, and which he doubtless copied from life, without reflection, betrays uneducated minds, and commonplace habits of thought and action.

By a singular contradiction, though the church forbade women, throughout mediæval times, and by actual prohibition in the 16th century, to take any active musical part in its services,—as I have already mentioned,—a feminine saint was adopted as patroness of music, and especially of church music. The life of Saint Cecilia, though nar-

rated in the Golden Legend, is, however, partly mythical. We know that the lady so familiar to all lovers of art and poetry as Saint Cecilia, really existed and died a martyr; but it is uncertain whether Rome or Sicily was the scene of her death, and the date of that event varies in the narrations of various authorities. In regard to her musical attainments, we only know with any certainty, that she was in the habit of sweetly singing pious songs. If we search still further back in what I may term the primeval epoch of musical art, we find the Greek poetess Sappho to have been credited as the inventress of the so-called mixolydian mode in music, and also of a (then) new musical instrument, the pectis or magadis. And Miriam, the prophetess, who went out dancing and singing, the timbrel in her hand, who can say that her song of triumph was *not* her own composition?

But, to advance to the early days of modern music,—banished from active musical participation in the church service, woman's practical career as a public artiste only began with the invention of the opera, about A.D. 1600. It was not until her superiority as an actress and singer had been undeniably and triumphantly established on the stage, that she reconquered her musical share in the religious service. And what great distinction in such a position, woman has won for herself during the past 200 years! Volumes have been written on those opera singers, many of whose very names, as they echo through the pages of history, are in themselves romance and poetry, recalling as they do, the gifts, charms, accomplishments, charities, virtues, errors, adventures, and caprices of their possessors.

I shall only allude to a very few of these ladies; and one of the first mentioned in history we find to have been Vittoria Archilei, a highly accomplished musician at the court of Florence in 1600, and who took part in the first Italian opera that was composed and represented in public. Faustina Bordoni, born in 1700, wife of the famous composer Hasse, was one of the greatest artists that ever lived; medals were struck in her name, and societies established in her honour. Her rival, Regina Mingotti, whose portrait now stands in the Dresden Gallery, delighted the historian, Dr. Burney, by her freshness of voice at a very advanced old age, as well as by her power of conversing with equal elegance in five languages. Madame Mara, the favourite singer of Frederick the Great and of Marie Antoinette, enchanted Europe for nearly fifty years; at the age of seventy she still sang in public, though the power of her voice had vastly declined; some years afterwards, the great poet Goethe wrote a poem in honor of her birthday.

Caterina Gabrielli, the pupil of Metastasio, excited her audiences to alternate frenzies of admiration and anger, with her voice, beauty, caprices and adventures. When Catharine of Russia complained to the singer that her emoluments were far higher than those of the Field Marshals of the Empire, Madame Gabrielli replied, "Then your Majesty must try to make the Field Marshals sing!" Madame Catalani, born in 1779, possessed a trumpet-like power of voice; in London she received twelve hundred dollars for singing the solo in "God save the King," and twelve thousand dollars for assisting at one musical festival. Mrs. Billington, a blooming Englishwoman, far removed in physical and mental characteristics from the popularly received idea of a sorceress, was accused by the superstitious Neapolitans of causing the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 1794, by her wonderful vocal powers, and the excitement they produced in Naples. M. Thiers has translated the autobiography of Mrs. Billington into the French language. Another gifted and beautiful singer, Agnes Schebest, published an interesting autobiography ("*Aus dem Leben einer Künstlerin*"), about twenty years ago. Mrs. Sheridan, too (the wife of the dramatist), whose personal beauty and thrilling voice have been celebrated by poets and painters, was also remarkable for her poetic talent. Of Miss Stephens, the ballad singer, it was said that her power over the hearts of others arose from the depth of her own feeling, and the warmth and sensitiveness with which this informed her charming voice. Miss Stephens afterwards married the Earl of Essex.

I might long continue to enumerate such instances of genius and success in public songstresses; but any musical student can search for them in the standard Italian, French, German, and English dictionaries and biographies of musical art.

And who cannot recall, from the descriptions of older persons, or from memory, the accomplishments of more recent artists? Who has not heard, or heard of, the rich-voiced Mrs. Wood, the fascinating Malibran, the impassioned Madame Devrient—of whom it has been said that "she never sang an inferior song in public during her whole life,"—the charming Sontag and Patti, the intellectual Madame Lind, the exquisite Madame Nilsson?

Madame George Sand, in her * art-novel "Consuelo," has drawn, with that poetic charm and pursuasive force of style that belong to her supremely, the ideal character of a pure and noble artist woman, too deeply imbued by lofty enthusiam for her fine vocation, to barter its true principles for transitory success, social flattery, or pecuniary ad-

* May be obtained of th Publisher, post free, 2s. 4d.

vantage. This character has been in some measure realized in the persons of two ladies yet living, Madame Viardot-Garcia, the singer, sister of Malibran; and Madame Clara Schumann, the pianist, and widow of the composer Schumann.

That many of the famous songstresses of past days were capable of interpreting the works of composers in an almost independently creative manner, the scores of old operas prove. In many of these the melody is reduced to a mere thread, in order to give the songstress perfect liberty in varying the theme according to the passion and action of the poetry she was to interpret. But it is impossible for the most ardent disciple of woman's progress to point to such a galaxy of celebrities among female composers, as may be placed, without losing their brilliancy, beside the names that add lustre to womanhood in other branches of art, and in literature. In musical composition we cannot boast stars of such distinction as Mrs. Browning, Heloise, Mrs. Lewes, Mrs. Siddons, Mdme. Sand, Rosa Bonheur, Aspasia, Miss Cushman, Mdme. de Staël, Miss Brontê, Dora d'Istria, Miss Thompson, the nun Roswitha, Fernan Caballero, and all the rest. The list of feminine composers is a brief one, and most of its members are now living. There was the princess Amalia, of Prussia, sister of Frederick the Great, who composed operas and cantatas; Leopoldine Blahetka (daughter of a professor of mathematics in Vienna), who published more than 70 pianoforte pieces and songs, some of which were greatly admired by Beethoven; Josephine Lang, the friend of Mendelssohn, who composed a number of charming songs; Madame Farrenc, whose inspiration and science attained masculine proportions; Madame Fanny Hensel, sister of Mendelssohn; Louise Puget, whose vocal romances lately enjoyed an enormous popularity in France, and won a large fortune for their composer; Mdme. Schumann and Mdme. Garcia, who have composed some fine works, though few; Madame Dolby in England; Virginia Gabriel, the balladist; Elise Polko, who, carefully educated as a singer, lost her voice prematurely, then wrote for many years a number of novelettes, and now appears before the world as a song composer; and a few other ladies.

But women have only lately realized the depth and strength of the science of music, and what long years of severe mental discipline and scientific training are necessary in order to master the art of composition. This is not much to the dishonour of their courage and patience, indeed, for a comparatively small number of musical students among the other sex in America are willing to devote themselves to such self-sacrificing study; too many who do commence it become discouraged when they

begin to understand the amount of labor required, and the thorough training necessary to insure perfect development to their talent for composition, and lasting fame to its results. Mathematics, acoustics, psychology, languages, as well as general literary acquirements, the practice and technicalities of several instruments, and the science of music, must all be mastered by the aspirant in composition, and gradually, through the application and assimilation of long years of study, become the "second nature" of his mind. It may be some encouragement to the sincere student to know that the grandest original idea of a Handel or a Mozart, demanded as perfect working out, as fine polishing, as the smallest fancy that ever issued from the brain of a ballad writer. And why should not women of sufficient intellectual and especial ability to warrant the possibility of their obtaining honourable distinction, make an effort, and, discarding the absurd idea that composition is an affair of instinct, study to compose for immortality also? There is surely a feminine side of composition, as of every other art. And I would suggest the adoption of the science of composition as an elective, if not obligatory, branch of the higher course of study in ladies' colleges. From actual personal experience, I do not hesitate to pronounce it equal—merely as a mental discipline—to mathematics, while it enriches the mind to a far higher degree, and is far more likely to prove of practical benefit to women in after life, than the study of the other science.

The possible practical advantages of the conscientious study of other branches of music are well understood; talent, not sex, commands the highest prices in this art; the thorough, patient teacher is certain to earn a respectable livelihood; the fee of the first-class teacher is equal to that of the first-class physician; the salaries of great artists are equal to those of great ministers of state; the social position of the musician, even when of very low origin, rises in proportion to his or her talent, so that a Wagner, a Nilsson, a Schumann, etc., is received as an equal, possessing a God-given patent of nobility, in court circles to which mere wealth could never hope to attain; happily far from the days when a Haydn, a Mozart, were forced to solicit patronage, and even from those, more recent, in which a Baroness Dudevant begged her daughter-in-law to adopt a *nom de plume*, if she must dabble in literature, we see kings and emperors rivalling each other, as once in troubadour days, for that poetic fame with which a great artist is able to crown the memory of his friends; in a few words,—mind is rapidly becoming the great acknowledged motive power, and its manifestation, in the exquisite form of art, is beginning to be appreciated as it should be. Therefore, music *pays*.

And so our lady teachers and concert pianists are legion (and the names of the best among the latter so familiar to cultivated people, that I do not need to recall them), and yet the supply is not more than equal to the demand. More attention should be paid by women to the study of other instruments; the elegant, poetic, but very difficult harp, the soul-thrilling violin, even the—in a musical sense—*picturesque* guitar, are unjustly neglected, though several professional violinists among women now compete for the palm of pre-eminence in Europe; still, lady violinists may be counted by tens, where lady pianists number hundreds; and who that has heard the sisters Milanollo, and Madame Neruda there, or Camilla Urso in America, will deny that a woman's violin-playing possesses a tender, delicate, sympathetic charm, as pleasing in its way as the more varied and powerful stroke of a man? The study of singing ought to become far more general than it is in all schools; I do not mean the singing by rote of silly milk-and-water chorusses, or the singing, also by rote, of shallow ballads and operatic airs; but a slow and gradual mastery of the vocal art, from early childhood, and from its elements upwards. For though, to become a fine singer, a woman should possess more than average mental ability, patience and industry, a healthy physique, personal attractions, and a powerful voice; though very few, indeed, may hope to obtain universal contemporary fame, and subsequent historical recognition as great songstresses; though the concert singer's career does not yet offer sufficient pecuniary inducements, in America, to ladies who object to appear on the operatic stage; yet every woman possessed of a tolerable voice and ear, and unhindered by actual physical infirmity, should devote some portion of her time to the practice of singing, if only for health's sake. Singing, which is regulated by respiration, is the most important element of the gymnastic science; it is an aid to circulation; it heightens the spirits, adds grace and activity to the movements, and animation to the face. But the physical side of singing, like that of all arts, is only one of its sides; it does not merely improve the physical health of the singer,—when pursued under reasonable conditions, and the advice of an experienced musician—but it also exercises a positive moral force upon her hearers. The voice is an instrument which the singer carries with her; and as goodness, beauty, and happiness are almost the sole objects of unperverted artistic expression, and as even grief and terror themselves are ennobled when illustrated by art, the singer, merely by the action of communicating elevated emotion to her hearers by means of her voice, becomes, for the time,

a moral agent. It would be needless for me to dilate on the beneficial and enlivening effects of music at home and in society, or woman's interest in encouraging it; this is almost too well understood.

But, for the woman of refined musical taste and cultivation, who has no occasion to resort to music as a profession, there yet remains a rôle of no common influence; I mean that of the amateur. In every art there are three classes of persons interested; the creator,—poet, composer, painter, etc.; the reproducer,—artist-virtuoso, executant, etc.; and the amateur or art-lover. The creator, with the aid of that gift which we call "inspiration" by the force of genius, enthusiasm, and industry, enriches the world with new art-creations, greater or less of their kind; the reproducer, of every rank from a Kean, a Pasta, a Hans von Bülow, down to the humblest country organist, attains a degree of perfection according to his or her industrial capacity and power of identification with the vision, which it is his task to embody, of the creator; and the amateur ranks in value according to the good he is able to accomplish, not *in*, but *for* art and artists. Occasionally we find the producer and the reproducer combined,—as in the cases of Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn, without apparent injury to either faculty; but we cannot hope to find creator and performer distinct or combined, to any significant extent, in the amateur. For, as Hamerton says, the result of the artist's daily labor is that of many thousand consecutive previous days of study, experience, and reflection; while the result of the labor of the most enthusiastic amateur can only be drawn from unfinished training, and the experimental practice of a few occasional days. An abyss in degree, therefore, must always remain between the value of the works, critical opinions, and teachings of the artist, and those of the amateur; yet the amateur is as necessary to the artist as the artist to the amateur. The genuine amateur, with that inborn "hunger of the soul" for beauty and science, which is native to every noble mind, wishes to possess artistic productions, and to enjoy that refined, ideal influence, with which the society of the true artist delights those among whom he lives; on the other hand, the genuine artist is not only sustained in his elevated sphere, by the pecuniary appreciation shown by the *general* public for his books, music, paintings, sculpture, but he is incited to redoubled efforts by the admiration, encouragement, sympathy, of his *particular* amateur friends. We always find that where largely appreciative amateur taste exists, it is accompanied by great artistic productivity. In this sense, the amateur is the very left hand of the artist. Such was Lorenzo the Magnificent; the Duke of Chandos

to Handel; the late Prince Albert of England; such is Louis of Bavaria to Wagner. Such great amateur *power* is rarely found; but even *good-will* works wonders. Taste for art does not constitute an amateur; every one has a taste for art, of course, just as all women love flowers. But the *genuine*, unpretending amateur, the assistant, the befriender of artists, is an indispensable adjunct to all serious art development.

This rôle is, from its sensitive, sympathetic nature, especially fitted to a cultivated woman. If early trained to such technical knowledge of one or more arts as may render her judgment intelligent, if reverential towards the meaning, and enthusiastic for the beauty of art, if able to communicate her impression to others, she is the best of mediators between artists and the public. If we search the history of music, we find many women who have themselves become illustrious as amateurs, from the beneficent influence they have exerted on the lives of famous artists. But for Marie Antoinette's faithful support of her old master, Gluck, his wonderful operas, "Alceste," and his two "Iphigenias," might never have been brought out in Paris: Madame Von Breuning was almost an intellectual mother to Beethoven, in her kindness for, and care of him; Mdlle. Bosellis' friendship consoled Haydn in his severe trials; Mozart's wife, Constance, whose name he gave to the heroine of his opera, "The elopement from the Seraglio," was also his best friend; between Mendelssohn and his sister, the closest intellectual friendship existed; Madame Voigt was the helpful friend of Schumann and other composers; the beautiful voice of the Countess Delphine Potocka, the constant friend and pupil of Chopin, soothed the sufferings of his dying hour; and many more instances might be cited of woman's inspiring kindness and helpfulness to composers and performers, though they might not exceed in interest the charming memories of Goethe in his Weimar circle, incited to fresh efforts by the society of such women as the duchess Amalia, Madame von Stein, Bettina von Arnim, and the lovely singer Corona Schroeter; or the exalted friendship of Vittoria Colonna and Michael Angelo; and many other well known instances among poets and painters. Not all ladies, however, are fortunate enough to boast a Gluck, a Handel, a Beethoven, a Michael Angelo, a Tasso, among her everyday friends; not all women possess the wealth and power of a Princess Belgioioso or a Baroness Rothschild; but every American lady who possesses the indispensable kindness of heart, refinement, generosity and culture, as well as influence,—the wives of men of intellectual power, inherited wealth, or great commercial prominence, more especially—can accomplish a great deal in her own small circle.

Ladies can do this in many ways; by reasonably persistent self-culture; by aiding in the formation of libraries of musical literature, of collections of rare musical instruments, and of private societies for the home practice of music; by condemning all that is unworthy of, and extraneous to art; by discountenancing the insinuating charlatanism of impudent adventurers, or vulgar speculators, and by seconding the claims to social and public distinction of genuine artists; by dissuading aspirants of insufficient talent, from the profession of art, which, rightly pursued, is a secular ministry, but which, to be really successful as such, demands remarkable qualities in its high-priests; by sustaining the efforts of gifted women-artists, compelled by sacred duty or sublime adversity, to make a public display of their talents; by lending their influence to, and bestowing pecuniary aid on, every worthy artistic enterprise. These grateful offices fall most naturally into the hands of the *women* of America, since from the very nature of life here, the time of men of influence is almost wholly occupied with the claims of business or politics; few among them study music at all in their youth, and how many who do, are able, on leaving college and entering the actual school of life, to prosecute musical practice and studies, and to carry them to any practical result, amid the conflicting claims of some profession, of commerce, or statesmanship?

With lady amateurs, then, will chiefly rest the happy task of preparing, by a beneficent use of such abilities as they may possess, the soil which must foster the young germs of future American art, and of hastening the day of its appearance, though this may be long in coming; for history teaches us that the formation of so-called national "schools" of any art, acknowledged as such by other nations, and the world at large, and not only by friends at home, must be the work of long centuries rather than of years.

One of the finest recommendations of music to our sex, as an art worthy of universal cultivation, is, that it not only penetrates to the mind of the hearer, but to the heart also, thus widening and enlivening the faculties, and rendering them better prepared, by sympathy, to receive humane and elevated impressions. For what is all culture, even the highest, save a means to an end? And what is that end, if not the vivifying and humanizing of the heart, even more than the purifying and strengthening of the intellect? Music possesses a lofty ethical significance; the very heart of humanity beats in its rhythm; and heart speaks to heart far more completely and efficaciously than brain to brain. Music too, bases itself on the social sentiment of mankind; it is the

annihilator of egotism, the most complete expositor of the life of mankind in unison, the art whose high mission it is to express the noblest, warmest, most generous of human feelings, religion, love, and patriotism; the art of order, unity, harmony; the art that is destined to become, in the far-distant, slowly advancing era of general civilisation, equality, and brotherhood, the universal language of humanity.

Published by W. REEVES, 185 Fleet Street, London.

Flagellation and the Flagellants. A History of the Rod in all countries from the earliest period to the present time, by Rev. W. Cooper, B.A. Fourth edition, with over 20 plates, thick cr. 8vo. 7/6.

REMINISCENCES IN THE CAREER OF A NEWSPAPER.

Starting a "Daily" in the Provinces, a history of "The Sheffield Daily Telegraph," by W. Shepherdson, cr. 8vo. cloth 2/—paper 1/.

Music and Musicians, Essays and Criticisms by Robert Schumann, Edited Translated and annotated by F. Raymond Ritter, portrait, thick cr. 8vo. 8/6.

History of Music from the Christian Era to the Present Time, by F. L. Ritter, with list of over 500 works relating to Music, portrait thick cr, 8vo. 7/6.

Life of Mendelssohn, by W. A. Lampadius. Edited and Translated by W. L. Gage, with Supplementary Sketches by Sir Julius Benedict, Henry F. Chorley, Ludwig Rellstab, Bayard Taylor, R. S. Willis and J. S. Dwight. Additional Notes by C. L. Gruneisen. SECOND EDITION revised by W. A. Barrett, Mus. B. Portrait, cr. 8vo. 5/.

Life of Chopin, by Franz Liszt, translated and edited by M. W. Cook, cr. 8vo. 6/. "Franz Liszt has written a charming sketch of Chopin's life and art." ENCY. BRIT.

Life of Cherubini, Memorials illustrative of, by E. Bellasis, portrait, thick cr. 8vo. 6/.

Bible Music, being variations in many keys on Musical Themes from Scripture, by F. Jacox, cr. 8vo. 3/6.

Catalogue of Musical Works—Biography Histories, Treatises, &c. Post free for stamp.

English Glee and Madrigal Writers. Two lectures delivered at the London Institution, by W. A. Barrett, Mus. B., 8vo. sewed 2/6.

Ernst von Elterlein's Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas explained, translated by E. Hill, with a Preface by E. Pauer, cloth, 3/6—paper 2/6.

The Organ, Hints on its Construction, Purchase, and Preservation, by W. Shepherdson. *Frontispiece*, 8vo., cloth, 3/—paper 1/6.

Year Book and Calendar of Trinity College, London, for 18.6-77. *Frontispiece* post 8vo. 1/6.

Music in Play and Music in Earnest. A Lecture by A. O. Steed. Price 6d.

THE PENNY MELODIST. Monthly, one penny, contains Songs, Duets, Piano Music, Glees, Catches, and music for Voice, Concertina, Violin, &c.

9 volumes now ready, price 1/ each.